

January 29, 1949.

Dr. D. Hockenhull,  
College of Technology,  
Manchester 1, England.

Dear Dr. Hockenhull,

Thank you for your letter of the 9th.

For some time, we have been interested in methods for mutant isolation, particularly among bacteria. The problem seemed to boil down to finding situations or agents which would be more deleterious to cells which can or do grow, than to those which are more restricted. On this basis, we have found and recently published in the J. Am. Chem. Soc. that penicillin can be used very effectively to concentrate biochemical mutants in *Escherichia coli*. I have no doubt that parallel methods could be made to work, perhaps using heat-treatment of germinating spores, or some such thing. If you have any particular ideas along these lines, we may be able to have them tested on *Neurospora*.

Sincerely,

Joshua Lederberg,  
Assistant Professor of Genetics.